

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY

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SUBJECT: AMERICAN PRESS COVERAGE

VIENNA AND GENEVA FOR MBFR AND CSCE

INFO FOR PAOS

1. HIGHLIGHTS. TUESDAY PAPERS FRONTPAGED TRADE SURPLUS,
WEDNESDAY PAPERS FRONTPAGE LIFTING OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT
CURBS. TUESDAY PAPERS INSIDE REPORTED SOVIET MIRV SHOT
INTO PACIFIC; WASHPOST REPORTED LAIRD SAYING SOVIETS
MAY SEEK TO LULL US. WEDNESDAY NYTIMES REPORTS KISSINGER
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TRIPS DELAY SALT TALKS. SUNDAY LATIMES HAD PARIS STORY ON

DISENCHANTMENT WITH DETENTE. SCATTERED COMMENTS AND POLLING RESULTS.

2. SALT DELAY. NYTIMES WASHINGTON SPECIAL REPORTS NIXON ADMINISTRATION HAD HOPED SALT TALKS WOULD RESUME JAN. 31, THEY ARE NOW SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE EARLY IN FEBRUARY, ACCORDING TO AN OFFICIAL SOURCE. SPECIAL SAYS REASON FOR DELAY IS KISSINGER'S ABSENCE FROM WASHINGTON WHEN AMERICAN NEGOTIATING POSITION WAS BEING PREPARED WHILE HE WAS IN MIDEAST. VERIFICATION PANEL HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO MEET JAN. 11, SAYS SPECIAL, AND IT DID MEET THIS WEEK BUT IT COULD NOT BE ASCERTAINED WHETHER THE MEETING WAS ITS LAST

BEFORE RESUMPTION OF SALT.

3. RUSSIAN TEST. TUESDAY WASHPOST AP ARTICLE, ALSO CARRIED IN BALTIMORE SUN AND LATIMES REPORTED PENTAGON SAID SOVIETS CONDUCTED FIRST LONG-RANGE TEST OF ICBMS WITH SEPARATELY TARGETABLE WARHEADS ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY. TEST MARKS FIRST TIME SOVIETS HAVE LAUNCHED ICBMS AT DISTANCES, ESTIMATED AT 4,500 MILES, COMPARABLE TO REQUIREMENTS FOR ACTUAL USE. FRIEDHEIM SAID PENTAGON MISSILE SPECIALISTS BELIEVE TESTS INDICATE SOVIETS MORE THAN HALF WAY TOWARD POSSIBLE DEPLOYMENT OF SEPARATELY TARGETABLE MULTIPLE WARHEADS IN SS-19 CLASS OF MISSILES. NYTIMES FINNEY ADDED FRIEDHEIM SAID IT REMAINED ASSESSMENT OF DOD THAT SOVIET UNION WILL NOT HAVE MISSILE FORCE WITH MIRV WARHEADS IN OPERATION BEFORE 1976.

4. LAIRD. TUESDAY WASHPOST HAD LOCAL REUTER REPORTING LAIRD WARNED SOVIET UNION MAY BE TRYING TO LULL US INTO COMPLACENCY TO GAIN STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES, ADDING THAT SOVIETS HAVEN'T MATCHED THEIR WORDS WITH DEEDS IN ASSERTING THEY WANT BETTER RELATIONS WITH US. LAIRD REFERRED IN ARTICLE FOR READERS DIGEST TO DISQUIETING INDICATIONS THAT SOVIET UNION MAY LOOK UPON DETENTE AS OPPORTUNITY TO LULL US WHILE GAINING STRATEGIC GLOBAL ADVANTAGES; LAIRD IS TO BECOME THE MAGAZINE'S SENIOR ADVISER ON NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS ON LEAVING HIS GOVERNMENT.

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MENT POST FRIDAY. LAIRD EXPRESSED ALARM OVER CONTINUING SOVIET MILITARY BUILDUP, CALLING THIS A CURIOUS BACKGROUND TO SOVIET ASSURANCES OF SINCERITY IN ARMS REDUCTION. REUTER NOTED ARTICLE WAS PUBLISHED FEW DAYS BEFORE NIXON SENDS UP RECORD DEFENSE BUDGET, ADDING PRESIDENT HAS REPEATEDLY STRESSED NEED FOR STRONG DEFENSE WHILE NEGOTIATING RELAXATION OF TENSIONS. REUTER REPORTED LAIRD SAID ONE CONDITION FOR DETENTE SHOULD BE

REAL AND OBSERVABLE EVIDENCE OF SIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS OR LIMITATIONS IN SOVIET MILITARY SPENDING AND DEPLOYMENT BUT WE HAVE VERY LITTLE EVIDENCE TO SUGGEST SOVIETS ARE EVEN CONTEMPLATING SUCH REDUCTIONS.

5. DON COOK. SUNDAY LATIMES HAD COOK PARIS STORY SAYING THAT DOUBTS ABOUT DETENTE ARE CROPPING UP IN BRUSSELS, BONN, AND WASHINGTON CITING BOGGING DOWN OF SALT TALKS IN FACE OF WHAT AMOUNTS TO A SOVIET DEMAND FOR PERMANENT SUPERIORITY. IN VIENNA, SAID COOK, MBFR IS STALEMATED ON AT LEAST FIVE MAJOR POINTS OF DIFFERENCE, ANY ONE OF WHICH COULD HOLD UP PROGRESS INDEFINITELY; AND IN GENEVA CSCE HAS GROUND DOWN TO SUCH IMPERCEPTIBLE DIPLOMATIC MOVEMENT THAT WESTERN DIPLOMATS ARE NOW BEGINNING TO

DISCUSS SERIOUSLY HOW THE WHOLE THING MIGHT BE TACTFULLY RECESSED INDEFINITELY. COOK ALSO SEES SIGNS OF DISENCHANTMENT IN MOSCOW, MENTIONING SOLZHENITSYN AND KIROV BALLET CANCELATION. COOK CONCLUDES BY QUOTING A WESTERN NEGOTIATOR AT VIENNA: WE WILL GO ON TALKING AND TALKING AND NOTHING WILL HAPPEN, WHICH WILL PROBABLY BE THE BEST THING FOR THE WEST ANYWAY.

6. POLLS. LOUIS HARRIS IN JANUARY 10 PIECE DECLARED PRESIDENTIAL ASPIRANTS MIGHT WELL BE MAKING BLUNDER IN ASSUMING STRAINS RESULTING FROM SOVIET WHEAT DEAL, SOVIET POLICY TOWARD JEWISH EMIGRATION AND MIDEAST WAR CAN BE TAKEN TO MEAN COUNTRY WANTS TO RETURN TO HARD LINE IN SOVIET RELATIONS. HARRIS STATES 69 PERCENT WHO FEEL IT IS POSSIBLE FOR US AND RUSSIA TO REACH LONG-TERM AGREEMENTS TO HELP KEEP THE PEACE, ADDING THAT THIS SENTIMENT IS EXPRESSED ON SPECIFIC TOPICS BY MAJORITIES RANGING UNCLASSIFIED

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FROM 72 TO 91 PERCENT. HARRIS NOTES 85 PERCENT FAVOR STEPS WHICH WOULD GET RUSSIA TO GIVE MORE FREEDOM TO ITS WRITERS AND SCIENTISTS, ALSO 83 PERCENT FAVOR MEASURES TO GET RUSSIA TO ALLOW JEWS TO LEAVE MORE EASILY; BUT AT SAME TIME 91 PERCENT WANT US TO COOPERATE WITH RUSSIA FOR PEACE IN MIDEAST, 88 PERCENT FAVOR JOINT EFFORTS TO CURB POLLUTION, 76 PERCENT SEEK AGREEMENT LIMITING THE NUMBER OF NUCLEAR SUBMARINES--THIS FIGURE BEING UP FROM 72 PERCENT IN JUNE; 75 PERCENT WANT AGREEMENTS TO REDUCE NUMBER OF US AND SOVIET TROOPS IN CENTRAL AND WESTERN EUROPE; 75 PERCENT ALSO FAVOR FURTHER LIMITATIONS ON ANTI-MISSILE SYSTEMS; AND 72 PERCENT--DESPITE DISSATISFACTION WITH WHEAT DEAL--STILL WANT TO SEE EXPANDED US-SOVIET TRADE.

7. COMMENT. TUESDAY NYTIMES EDITORIAL EXPRESSED SOME

REASSURANCE ABOUT SCHLESINGER'S RECENT STATEMENT ON RE-TARGETING, BUT UNDERScoreD DANGER OF ANOTHER ACTION-RE-ACTION ARMS RACE AS IN CASE OF MIRVS. BUT SCHLESINGER SAYS US WON'T BE OVERTAKEN UNTIL EARLY 1980'S, SO WHERE IS NEED TO RUSH AHEAD WITH SOME PROGRAMS SUCH AS THE INCREDIBLY COSTLY TRIDENT? CHIEF NEED IS TO HOLD BACK DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING OF BIGGER MIRVS AND WORK FOR LIMITING THEM.

7A. WEDNESDAY NYTIMES HAS OP-ED PIECE BY QUANBECK AND BLECHMAN OF BROOKINGS INSTITUTION SAYING THAT PROPOSED DOD PROGRAM OF TEST FLIGHTS OF MINUTEMAN ICBMS FROM OPERATIONAL SILOS IN PACIFIC NORTHWEST WOULD PROVIDE ONLY MARGINAL BENEFITS IF ANY AS COMPARED WITH USUAL TEST PROGRAM. THE

NATION WOULD BE ACCEPTING SERIOUS RISKS SUCH AS HIGH COSTS, DANGER TO LIVES AND PROPERTY AND THE DISGRACE OF POSSIBLE FAILURES OF THE TESTS IN RETURN FOR MINIMAL GAINS. KISSINGER

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